

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LAGOS 07431 041719Z

44

ACTION AF-06

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FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 523

INFO AMCONSUL KADUNA

AMCONSUL IBADAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 7431

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, NI

SUBJECT: RECOGNITION OF NEW FMG ADMINISTRATION; MISCELLANEOUS

REF: A) LAGOS 7385, B) STATE 178433

1. DURING CHARGE'S INFORMAL CONVERSATION WITH ACTING MEA PERMSEC DOVE-EDWIN AUGUST 1 (REFTEL), DOVE-EDWIN MENTIONED THAT UK HAD JUST ANNOUNCED FORMAL RECOGNITION OF BRIGADIER MOHAMMED'S GOVERNMENT. HE WENT ON TO SAY FMG PRACTICE IS TO RECOGNIZE A GOVERNMENT JUST ONCE AND NOT BOTHER WITH FORMAL RECOGNITION OF SUCCESSOR GOVERNMENTS UNLESS RELATIONS HAVE BEEN SPECIFICALLY BROKEN AT SOME POINT. CHARGE TOOK OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE CLEAR THIS IS USG PRACTICE ALSO: WE ASSESS STABILITY AND DEGREE OF CONTROL OF NEW GOVERNMENT, MAINTAIN OPERATIONAL CONTACTS, AND THE NATURE OF OUR CONTACTS IS EVIDENCE OF CONTINUING RELATIONS WITH AND RECOGNITION OF THE GOVERNMENT; WE WOULD THEREFORE NOT REPEAT NOT BE MAKING A FORMAL STATEMENT OF RECOGNITION OF NEW FMG REGIME. DOVE-EDWIN WAS PLEASED AT THIS AND AGREED IT WOULD BE PARTICULARLY UNNECESSARY AS THE CURRENT DEVELOPMENT AMOUNTED TO A CHANGE OF ADMINISTRATION RATHER THAN OF GOVERNMENT.

2. DOVE-EDWIN WENT ON TO SAY THE NEW COMMISSIONERS SHOULD BE ANNOUNCED IN A COUPLE OF DAYS AND HE PLANNED TO

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 LAGOS 07431 041719Z

RECOMMEND TO HIS COMMISSIONER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS THAT HE

CALL IN THE HEADS OF DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS TO ASSURE THEM RE
CONTINUITY OF FOREIGN POLICY AOD RELATIONS, THEREBY
FINESSING NEED FOR AMBASSADORS TO CALL ON THE NEW
COMMISSIONER. (LAGOS 7345).

3. DOVE-EDWIN SAID THE REFERENCE TO REMOVAL OF "CIVIL"
COMMISSIONERS MEANT CIVILIANS, AND HE EXPECTED THAT ALTHOUGH
A NUMBER OF THE MILITARY COMMISSIONERS WERE TO GET OTHER
ASSIGNMENTS, THOSE SUCH AS WUSHISHI, ADEFOPE AOD ALI WOULD
REMAIN. (LAGOS 7271). IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION, DOVE-EDWIN
SAID THERE WOULD CONTINUE TO BE CIVILIAN COMMISSIONERS AT
THE FEDERAL LEVEL, ALTHOUGH PERHAPS NOT IN THE SAME
PROPORTION AS BEOFRE. HE SAID HIS OWN PROSPECTIVE
COMMISSIONER HAD EXCELLENT ACCESS TO BRIGADIER MOHAMMED.
HE DID NOT INDICATE WHETHER THE COMMISSIONER WOULD BE
MILITARY, BUT THIS APPEARED LIKELY, AND AT DINNER AUGUST 2
AN OFFICER IN MEA INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT CONFIRMED
THIS TO CHARGE. INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS OFFICER WENT ON TO
CROW THAT PERMSEC IYALLA WOULD GET THE SACK AND SAND
EIGHTY PERCENT OF THE OFFICERS IN THE MINISTRY WOULD
REJOICE AT THIS. INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS OFFICER SAID
FOCUS OF NEW GOVERNMENT WAS ALMOST ENTIRELY ON INTERNAL
PROBLEMS AND OPINED FOREIGN POLICY WILL BE LEFT LARGELY
TO MEA. (LAGOS 7367).
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